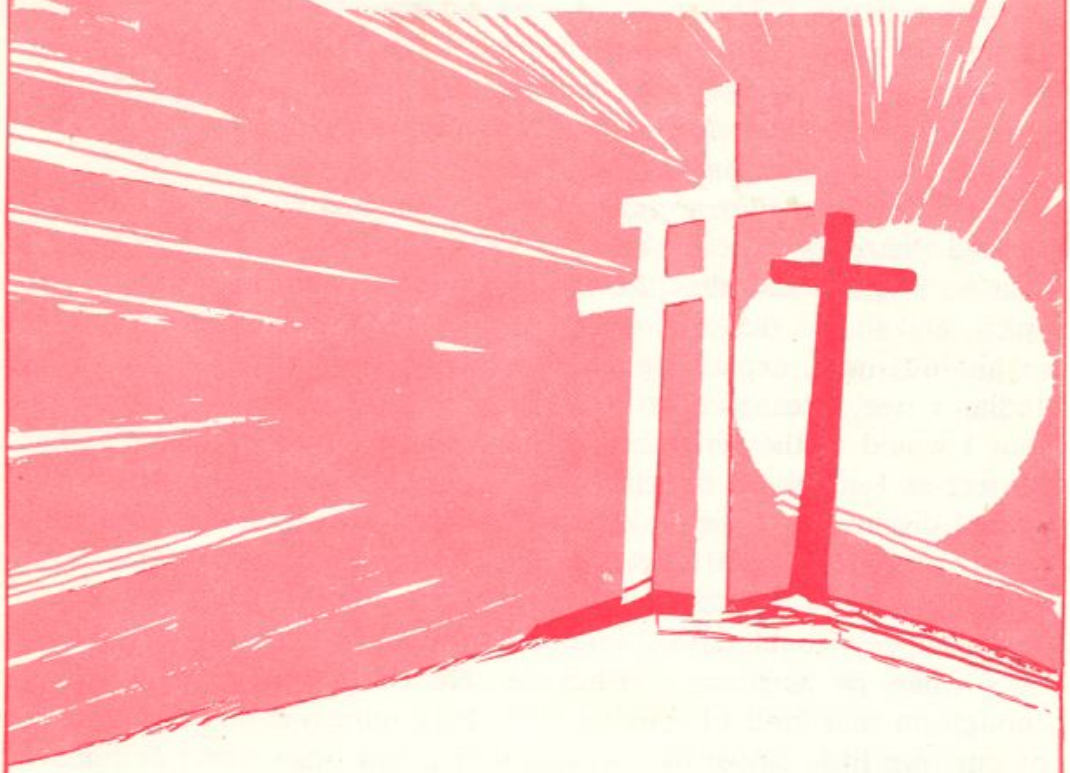
# RESTORATION REVIEW



## TWO BEARS OF SCRIPTURE

Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. — *Gal. 6:2*

Forbear one another in love. — *Eph. 4:2*

**Vol. 21, No. 6** **Leroy Garrett, Editor** **June, 1979**

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*Blessed are the Peacemakers . . .*

## PEACE BY WAY OF A LARGER VIEW

We cannot even be at peace with ourselves, not to mention being peacemakers at large, if our world is so small that we cannot see beyond our party walls or have anything to do with anyone who does not crow from our perch. “This plan of making our own nest,” as Alexander Campbell put it in his debate with Rice, “and fluttering over our own brood; of building our own tent, and of confining all goodness and grace to our noble selves and the ‘elect few’ who are like us, is the quintessence of sublimated pharisaism.”

The reformer may appear to over do it when he goes on to say that the old Pharisees were but babes in comparison to the modern ones, and that he is convinced that there is but one way to explain the sectarian spirit, and that is that it is the offspring of hell! But he includes himself in his judgment, explaining that “I was once so straight, that, like the Indian’s tree, I leaned a little the other way. I was so strict a separatist that I would neither pray nor sing praises with anyone who was not as perfect as I supposed myself. In this most unpopular course I persisted until I discovered the mistake, and saw that on the principles embraced in my conduct, there never could be a congregation or church upon earth. “

Campbell could hardly think of himself as a peacemaker in those days when he acted as a Pharisee. He could not come down hard enough on that kind of religion: “To lock ourselves up in the bandbox of our own little circle; to associate with a few units, tens, or hundreds, as the pure church, as the elect, is real Protestant monkery, it is evangelical pharisaism.” He was a “modern Pharisee” that changed into a peacemaker. We would all do well to follow him as he followed Christ. But if we are concerned for peace we must break out of our little bandbox and discover the larger Christian world.

I am writing these lines while at Kentucky Christian College in the foothills of the Appalachians in eastern Kentucky, where I am teaching a short course on our history. And history has laid her hand on these parts. The Blue and the Gray fought in these hills and vales, and many of our pioneers responded to “Our Plea” from these hollows. It is probable that more gospel, certainly the “primitive gospel,” has been preached in this state than any other region of the world. Within a stone’s throw of my apartment is a historic marker, reminding the visitor that veterans of the Civil War, foes and comrades alike, met on these grounds for forty years, until they all passed on. They told stories, sang the old ballads, and repaired to the hill above them to visit the graves of their buddies who fell in battle.

But I was able to reach out and touch a bit of history when I accompanied Fred Waggoner, who is on the staff at the college, on Lord's day into the very heart of Appalachia, down south to Beattyville, into the region where Daniel Boone once walked, and walked, and walked, to visit the Christian Church (or Church of Christ). Fred tells me he has started several churches and never considered calling them anything except Church of Christ, and he was 29 years old before he knew there was such a thing as "non-instrument" Churches of Christ. There are many Churches of Christ in these parts, but nearly all the older ones adopted the organ along with Sunday Schools and stained-glass windows, and never thought much about it until recent years when some came with the "non-instrument" gospel, insisting that they would have to divide, if necessary, to be a *true* Church of Christ.

We breakfasted in Mt. Sterling and, of course, we had to talk about old Raccoon John Smith, who lived there much of his life. When Campbell first came into his area in 1824, Raccoon tried to get his Baptist folk to invite the reformer to Mt. Sterling, but they could not bear to be so liberal as that. So old Raccoon took off on horseback to hear him for himself, and what a wonderful change that wrought in his life!

But it was at Beattyville that the real fun began, for I got to see the "sacred desk" that long stood in the old Main St. church in Lexington, the one used during the Campbell-Rice debate. Various agencies among us have been after that old heirloom, but the church is not going to part with it. When I was invited to speak, I stepped behind that old pulpit, which is slung surprisingly low, especially for tall Texans, and explained that my remarks would be based upon something that Alexander Campbell said in that debate back in 1843 behind that very desk.

Rice was needling Campbell for his so-called "reformation," charging that he was only starting another sect, "Sir," the old sage responded, "Ours is a catholic religion. It is not *Roman* Catholic or *Greek* Catholic, but it is *very* catholic." Campbell always loved that term, and he was not about to surrender it to some sect that would corrupt it with some such limitation as *Roman.*

"We have a catholic Bible," he went on to say to Rice, "in that we accept no human creed as our rule of faith and practice, but the Scriptures only, which all believers can accept. We have a catholic name in that we call ourselves Disciples or Christians, on which all believers can unite. We have a catholic baptism, immersion, which is admitted by all to be Scriptural. We have a catholic creed in that we base our faith upon that grand proposition that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And he nailed it all down with, "So, sir, you will never make a sect of us!"

Campbell was being a peacemaker in that speech. Even Rice the Presbyterian, as recalcitrant as he was, could be a Christian *only,* though not perhaps a Baptist or a Methodist. And he could surrender his Confession of Faith (they *then* made what it said a test of fellowship) and accept the Scriptures only for the sake of unity. And laying aside all the artificial confessions devised by man, why not unite upon that confession made by Peter, the Golden Oracle that Jesus is the Christ, and make that the only test of fellowship. How can you be more unsectarian than that, how more catholic? All believers will concede that immersion is Scriptural, while it is other modes that are suspect. That is catholicity.

Well, they seemed pleased with what I had to say. Some of them had never even seen a "non-instrument Church of Christ" man before; but one sister who has seen such critters confided that "You seem to be different." I assured her that she had worlds of sisters and brothers in Texas and Tennessee who, just like me, would love and accept her as a full blood sister in the Lord.

The only thing that left them puzzled that I did not take the time to explain was that in my own "non-instrument" church in Denton, Texas we nonetheless had two pianos. Just how a church could be non-instrument and still have two instruments was something that surpassed Appalachian logic, and I think they were satisfied to pass it off as Texas logic. I should have explained that we have a day school that uses the pianos, and that we have both sisters and brothers who would scale the pianos and lock them with hands and feet before they would allow one of them to play during what we call "worship," which just may be a logic all its own. But that there are Churches of Christ in Texas who do not make the instrument a test of fellowship was good news in Beattyville, Kentucky.

Whether Beattyville or Denton, or Texas or Kentucky, or Christian Churches or Churches of Christ, are we truly catholic in the tradition of Alexander Campbell? If we see the Christian Church only in terms of the *Standard*, or the NACC, or CBS, or KCC or Johnson, then we are not truly catholic. If we see the Church of Christ as those who are true to "the five acts of public worship" and have only acapella music, then we are not truly catholic. If we see the Christian Church or Church of Christ, and the terms mean exactly the same thing, as the Body of Christ and made up of all those the world over who are baptized believers, then our view is truly catholic, and we can say *Amen!* to what Campbell said to Rice. And, yes, with that view of things, we will never be a sect.

Since he was a peacemaker with a larger view of things, Campbell could talk about uniting the Christians in all the sects. That implies, of course, that there are Christians out there among the sects, otherwise there would be none to unite. So long as we are exclusivists, fluttering over our own brood, and claiming to be the only Christians, we can be neither peacemakers nor a unity movement. Nothing is more contrary to a unity plea

than to be so separated as to have no fellowship whatever with other Christians. If we are the only Christians, then there are no Christians to unite except ourselves, and what kind of unity movement is that?

*Sir, ours* is *a catholic religion! Very catholic!* I buy that. And let us sound it forth, wherever we are standing, from every "sacred desk." And let us allow no one to make a sect of us—including ourselves!—*the Editor*

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## THE TWO BEARS

In an old 1873 issue of the *Gospel Advocate* there is a story about two bears that may be corny, but I like it. There was this old married couple that had fussed all their years together. Their neighbors in their little village were never with them but what they were quarreling about something, and they would hardly ever pass their humble abode unless they were going after each other. So it was to the amazement of all when they suddenly stopped all such foolishness and began to live in peace. It was the talk of the village and everyone wondered what had gotten into them.

When one woman could stand it no longer she went to the couple and made inquiry as to the reason for the change. The wife, who at this point would usually have been fussing with her husband about something, explained to the neighbor that it was because they had allowed two bears to come live with them. The neighbor, who took everything literally, was puzzled as to what kind of talk that was, knowing that the couple's little cottage was hardly big enough for them, much less two bears. And besides what would bears have to do with changing people's lives like that?

The wife explained that the two bears came to them right out of the Bible. This did not satisfy the neighbor's curiosity, for the only bears that she could think of in the Bible were those that got after those kids for making fun of a prophet. So the wife told her about other bears in the Bible, *bear* and *forbear,* quoting the two verses that had turned their lives around:

"Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).

"Forbear one another in love" (Eph. 4:2).

Well, the inquisitive neighbor in the story may not be the only one ignorant of the two most important bears in the world, bears that can turn our lives around, transform our homes and restore peace and unity to our churches. And the wife in the story, who learned

to quit feuding and fussing, points to two of the most important lessons in the Bible. If bearing one another's burdens means to *put each other up*, when necessary, forbearing one another in love means to *put up with each other.* We have not learned either lesson all that well. Two bears. It is a good place to start in rebuilding our homes and churches.

These two bears reveal to us how important it is in God's sight that we treat each other properly. How many commandments of God can you think of that are followed by *and thus fulfill the law of Christ?* Even repentance, one of the greatest commandments of all, has no such connection. Nor does faith, baptism, or prayer, as important as they are. Since love is the only commandment in Scripture that is referred to as fulfilling all the demands of the law, I take it that this is what Paul means in Gal. 6:2. Our love for each other causes us to bear each other's burdens, and this fulfills the law of Christ, which I understand to be the law or principle of love. The law of Christ *is* the law of love. When I see that my sister needs me and I reach out in love and bear those burdens that are too heavy for her to bear alone, I am showing the love Jesus shows. So, I put my sister up as well as put up with her. This is what love does, bearing and forbearing love.

Eph. 4:2 must be the great undiscovered passage of the New Covenant scriptures. Oh, we may know it is there, but we have not really made it ours. It is a bear that we have not invited into our hearts, our homes, our churches. It may be that we fear its implication. By its very meaning it shows that we are to put up with things that we do not like or do not believe. It tells me that I am to put up with you and *accept* you, warts and all. In spite of your hangups I am to forbear. I am to put up with you in spite of your errors.

We really have the thing fouled up. We leave the impression with our brothers —"brothers in error" we call them—that they must get rid of all their errors and be exactly like ourselves, and *then* (and not before) we will accept them. If this is right, why would the apostle say *forbear one another in love?* Does that not imply that there is something to forbear, something we do not endorse or approve of? How can we insist upon conformity —seeing eye-to-eye on all the "issues"—and yet obey the command to forbear? If we demand satisfaction on all points of disagreement, what is there left to forbear?

Some of us talk too much and say things that turn folk off. Some of us are too pushy, causing others to grow weary of us. We all have prejudices that get in the way of other people's prejudices, and we are all in error about some things, except of course the infallible ones among us. These are facts of life, and will not likely change this side of the millennium. Life is difficult for us all, and the best of us sometimes add to the miseries of others. Our churches never have and never will agree on everything, and there will always be some rather sharp differences.

We can have congregations that support the agencies, even if halfheartedly, and we can have those that do not. We can have those that use an instrument and those that do not. There can be churches that are gung-ho on the millennium or spiritual gifts, with some that even speak in tongues, and we can have those that are not, with some that do well to speak good English. We can have these differences and still more, and yet be the one Body of Christ together.

If it would be better that we believe and practice substantially alike, and I would not deny that, we are more likely to reach common ground *within* a context of love, fellowship, and acceptance.

The way to greater manifestation of unity and fellowship may be simpler than we have supposed. The story of the two bears gets close to an answer. Loving forbearance hides a multitude of shortcomings (another undiscovered passage) and causes us to accept each other, hangups and all.

And if you are looking for a way to bring sunshine back into your home and to put a shine on your marriage, this is it. Forbearance teaches a man that what is important is not to try to change in his wife the things he does not like, but to seek to change in himself the things she does not like. It teaches a woman that what is really important is not that she be loved but that she loves. Loving forbearance will put it all together. Nothing else will, not even lots of money.—*the Editor*

From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, 0 God of truth, deliver us.—*An ancient prayer*

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## THE ISSUE IS NOT THE ISSUE

One of our women here in Denton who recently attended one of these marriage encounter weekends revealed to me how much it meant to her and her husband. While those who attend such sessions are reluctant to reveal very much about the technique used, and with good reason, this sister told me one thing that lingers with me. One of their

working principles is that *the issue is not the issue.* The issue may be the children, or money, or sex, but the marriage encounter folk say that these things are not really the issue. It is something else, such as whether the couple is committed to the marriage.

*The issue is not the issue.* I see liberating wisdom in that, and it applies to so many things in life. There are the *good* reasons we give for things we do, and we even convince ourselves, but they are not the *real* reasons. We've all read in the press those tragic stories of someone being murdered in a dispute over a few dollars or maybe a dog, but the real reason is hardly ever that superficial. The issue is something like deep-seated resentment and hate that goes back many years, not merely the loss of a pet dog. The *presumed* issue is not really the issue.

So, the issue with the distraught housewife is not really that she wants to take a job or that her husband does not help her with the children as he ought, but whether she feels loved, needed, and appreciated. Insecurity can manifest itself in all sorts of false issues. Lack of help may be an issue, but not *the* issue.

I've known college professors along the way who are negative and disgruntled about everything on campus, even taking it out on their students. Various "issues" were manufactured as to what ailed them, but the real reason was that they did not get the promotions and the attending salary that they thought they deserved. In east Texas some years ago two elders got into a fist fight right in the church building. I do not recall the alleged issue between them, and they might not now be able to recall it themselves, but the *real* issue was their fear and insecurity and their unwillingness to face up to their creatureliness before the Creator. The real issue oftentimes is that people want to play God —and too bad for anyone who gets in their way!

It is amazing how that paradigm from the marriage seminar applies to the story of our divisions among Churches of Christ-Christian Churches. Almost never in the sad story of our factions has the issue really been the issue. At my side is a bulletin from a Church of Christ in Texas with an article on "The Cause of Division." The author explains why we have divided time and again through the years: "The thing that caused the division among God's people is a change of attitude toward the word of God." This is why we divided over instrumental music and missionary societies, he assures us. Our folk came to view the authority of the Scriptures differently. Those who opposed the instrument and the societies respected the authority of the Scriptures and the others did not!

Our brother might have difficulty explaining why J. W. McGarvey, the trusted scholar of yesteryear who stood firm against instrumental music, favored missionary societies. I would say that McGarvey respected the Scriptures *both* in opposing the instrument and

favoring the society, and that the real issue must be something else—such as whether some things are matters of opinion and whether there is to be freedom to differ in such areas.

Our brother goes on to layout the same old bromide that we've heard all these years: "The only way our differences will ever be resolved will be for all to go to the Scriptures and give scriptural authority for the things we do in religion." This means, of course, that *he* has Scripture for all he does while those who differ with him (on such things as the instrument and societies) do not. Even the esteemed McGarvey could not come within the pale of this brother's fellowship. Our brother is unable to see that the issue is not that some respect the Scriptures and others do not, but that sincere people can and do differ on methods. The issue is whether we are going to love and accept each other anyway, and not for the purpose of disputing over such questions, as Rom. 14:1 instructs us in just those words.

*The issue is not the issue!* I see that in reference to our recent division in Churches of Christ over Herald of Truth and orphan homes, giving us "liberal" churches and "conservative" churches, as some would classify us. But the issue was not really Herald of Truth, just as it was not earlier societies, instruments, Sunday Schools, and all the rest.

The issue is really whether we will be a carnal people and divide or a spiritual people and be united. No party sees everything alike, including "conservative" churches, who continue to have such differences that they even debate each other and "write up" each other in their journals. Divisive issues are manufactured by people who walk after the flesh and thus choose to separate from their brothers.

Our pioneers insisted that "We are free to differ but not to divide." So long as they believed that they remained a united Movement. When they reversed its meaning they began to divide.

The real issue is whether we will be a loving, uniting people or a hating, dividing people. The real issue is Jesus' prayer for the oneness of his people. The real issue is that division is a sin—let's hear it, *a sin*—and whether or not we will commit that sin.

The issue is not differences. We'll always have differences, even when we start another party *(alias* faithful church). If not instruments, agencies, or millennial notions, then something else. Such as a "bus ministry," which is a big deal these days. One journal listed this as a mark of a "liberal" church, and of course such churches are to be marked. So to bus or not to bus becomes the issue.

But we have seen that the issue is not really the issue.

The issue is whether we are resolved to love one another even as Christ loves us.

And, oh yes, when you come in from work tired and the wife is late with dinner and the exchange is on the grumpy side, *that* is not the issue. The issue is whether you are going to do yourself a favor and love your wife!—*the Editor*

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## LEARNING TO PRAY

It is noteworthy that Jesus' disciples never asked the Master to teach them anything except to pray. *Lord, teach us to pray,* they petitioned, as if that would take care of all their other responsibilities. Praying is probably the most important thing we ever do, and yet we know far too little about it. When you stop to think about it, it is a staggering concept, that mortal man actually communes or talks to the Creator of the universe. Man is admitting both his creatureliness and his fallenness when he prays. If he really believes there is Somebody listening, and that what he says will in some way make a difference, it speaks volumes as to the character of his religion. Among other things it means that he really believes one of the most impressive promises of all Scripture: *that if we will draw nigh unto God, He will draw nigh unto us.* They must be few who really believe that, and I presume that we must grow gradually into that kind of faith.

When the sinful Bertrand Russell, Britain's crusty philosopher who mocked his nation's false values, was asked about man's greatest and most pleasurable experience, he unflinchingly declared that it was sex. Those who are blessed with breathtaking marriages, especially those that have a spiritual quality, will concede that the old philosopher was right, or at least more right than wrong. After all, sex is God's creation, and there is no reason why its ultimate fulfillment should not be indescribably beautiful. Man is not usually that honest about sex. But I should think that there is one human experience that would far exceed the one that Russell named, even if man rarely enjoys it to any appreciable degree, and that is drawing nigh to God.

I've long been profoundly impressed with Scripture's brief description of old Enoch: *he walked with God.* Maybe there are but few in human history of which that can be said, *really* be said. Enoch surely enjoyed many pleasures within the context of that holy walk, and this is where sex should come since it too is worship (I hope I don't lose you with that one, but surely *everything* the believer does is within his service to God), but for Enoch to live so close to God that he "walks" with Him surely points to man's greatest adventure and most scintillating pleasure. It is indeed the ultimate of human happiness and the purpose of religion.

I am not presuming to teach you how to pray, for I am but a disciple myself. I am only setting forth a few observations that may prove helpful along the way, and this is my first one: that we set our hearts upon the presence of God, not so much that we *come* into His presence but that we are already in His presence, all the time. Yet prayer is something special within this, for we do "draw nigh" unto Him in prayer. The suggestion that we practice "the presence of God" is almost too much even for the one who makes it. Isaiah was overawed with the reality of God's presence and was moved to praise God and to confess his own uncleaness. Should it be any different with us, prophets or not?

God is our Father and that is a precious truth, but this can imply intimacy without suggesting familiarity. We can be comfortable and peaceful in His presence without it being commonplace. While I appreciate any effort to get inside the meaning of *Abba, Father,* I cannot help but scringe when someone addresses "Our Father who art in heaven" as *Daddy.* I will say, *Abba, Father,* for He has made me a son, but I am not going to address the God of heaven as *Daddy.* I am much more comfortable with, "I praise thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," which is the way Jesus prayed (Matt. 11:25).

While prayer is certainly personal, it becomes *too* personal, even individualistic, when the sense of community is lost. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, *Our* Father, not *My* Father. "Give *us* this day *our* daily bread," he prayed. He did of course use *I* when he was praying personally, and so should we. But one appears to be insensitive to the community when he prays within the assembly and sounds as if it is his own personal prayer. The "prayers of the church" were important to our pioneers in their pilgrimage to restore the ancient order, and they should be to us. Always, I believe, we should pray in reference to being a part of the Body of Christ, remembering our sisters and brothers by name.

Praise is a form of prayer and our "drawing nigh" is enriched when we praise the Father for His glorious work among men. We praise Him because He is the God of the living and not of the dead, and because He raised up Abraham as the father of the faithful and manifested Himself in the Person of Jesus. There are many different ways that we can say *Hallowed be thy name.*

Our prayers are enriched as they are more specific and less general. They have more substance when we get beyond thanking and praising Him for "our many blessings" to a specific reference to the bounties of this very day. Do we thank him for sound minds and bodies, for eyesight, that we can get up out of bed, for books, for those who have blazed the trail before us in many areas (naming some of them specifically, such as thanking the Father for what He did for us through Thomas Edison or Louis Pasteur).

How beautiful it is for us to pray that we might bear Christ's likeness more and more each day, and in specific ways. "May those with whom I work today see something of Jesus tenderness and forgiveness in me. May they be able to see that I have today been with Jesus."

We should pray specifically about our sins, especially our *secret* sins. If a sister has jealousy in her heart toward another who is prettier or wealthier than herself, let her bare her soul before the Lord, naming the sin (and perhaps the person) and suing for His cleansing. When a brother has those secret love affairs in his heart (and we are not to assume that the President is the only one who does!), let him lay it all before Him who is eager to show mercy. We confess our sins to the Lord by *naming* them for what they are. It is bad enough to play games with each other, we certainly must not do so with the Lord. Confessions can be so general as to be meaningless. When a father or mother can pray, "Lord, I lost my temper when I spoke like that to the little child you gave me," even the angels must take note that the person means business.

Because he learned to lay his soul bare before his Maker may be one reason David was called a man after God's own heart. "You see me, whether I am working or resting," he said to the Father in Ps. 139, "you know all my actions." He goes on to pray: "Even before I speak, you already know what I will say. You are all around me on every side; you protect me with your power." And it was in prayer that David learned of the character of God: "Sincerity and truth are what you require . . . My sacrifice is a humble spirit, a God; you will not reject a humble and repentant heart." (Ps. 51)

That tells us something about the way we should pray, which is probably the most important thing we do, especially when we pray for others. Had Jesus never prayed, it would be understandable since he himself was divine. But the Scriptures make it clear that even he, whose life was not fragmented by sin as is ours, prayed always. Within the shadow of the cross he prayed more for others than for himself. He asked the Father that his disciples might be one, and he prayed that all believers would be united so that the world might be saved.

Jesus was the great peacemaker. He prayed for peace and he died for peace. If in the face of death he prayed for the unity of his community, that they love one another even as he loved them, should the modern church, each of us, pray and work for the oneness of all God's children?—*the Editor*

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*Pilgrimage of Joy. . . No. 36*

## LAVA FROM ABOVE

*W. Carl Ketcherside*

It was John Milton who called death "the golden key that opens the palace of eternity." As I think of 1959-60 I am impressed with how often that key opened the palace door for older persons whom I loved. Then I recall that I was fifty-two years of age and those of the preceding generation were ripe for the reaper's scythe. It is not in a morbid spirit but simply to keep the record straight that I mention a few of those whom "the great leveler" called home to be with Christ in this brief period.

There was John Egarian, who died at Riverside, California, at the age of 94. He was born in Betios, Syria, 14 miles from Antioch, on February 22, 1865. He learned to speak Armenian, Turkish and Arabian, but English was too much for him. He became skilled in silkworm culture, and was a consultant on silk production and manufacture while mayor of his city for many years. I baptized him and his good wife, with several others in the Armenian colony in 1939. He was 74 at the time and we had to speak through an interpreter.

On March 14, A. E. McClaflin, an elder at Bickness, Indiana, died of a heart attack. I had stayed in his home many times, and the hours were spent in discussion of the word. His wife, Bessie, was a talented writer. For years she did a column for the Apostolic Review called "Leaves From a Rose Retreat," as their lovely home was called. Upon two occasions we had stayed up all night long talking about the Bible.

On June 16, J. W. Watts, Nell's father died. I was very close to him. Born in the Ozark hills he had grown up with little formal schooling. He came to the mining area when it was rough and tough. He was baptized by Daniel Sommer and was thoroughly committed to Christ. Twice he had been elected mayor of the city of Flat River. He was universally respected through the area for his commonsense, fairness and justice. I conducted his funeral service before one of the largest audiences ever to attend such an event. That day we learned what it meant to sorrow not as others which have no hope.

Brother E. M. Zerr was seriously injured near Martinsville, Indiana, October 29. He had celebrated his 82nd birthday two weeks before. He drove his car on to the highway directly in the path of one that was coming. He lingered four months in a coma, never regaining consciousness. He died on February 22, 1960. During his lifetime he conducted 75 protracted studies of the Bible in depth. For years he was the query editor for the Apostolic Review. He was the only man in the restoration movement who had produced a commentary on the entire Bible. A great deal of it was written in our home. I had gone to

see him a few months before his accident. He was very cold and formal toward me. He thought I had "left the faith" because I insisted that God's people were still scattered throughout the sectarian world.

On the same day Brother Zerr died, a mutual friend of ours, James Vermillion, departed this life in Riverside, California. I first met him in Springfield, Missouri, when I arrived there at the age of fourteen to hold a tent meeting on North National Boulevard. I stayed in his home and played with his boys. In later years he got a thrill out of telling how he would have to come out and tell me it was time to come in and get washed up for the meeting.

On January 4, A. W. Harvey, died in Bloomington, Indiana, as the result of a stroke. He had been a friend of the Sommer family for years, although he was not that close to D. Austen Sommer, whom he regarded as extreme. He was widely known because of his authorship of a booklet called "Bible Colleges."

On February 6, Robert Brumback died of a cardiac condition, in Phoenix, Arizona, where he had gone upon the recommendation of his physician. He was author of two books which I published. One was "History of the Church Through the Ages." I proofread the 430 pages three times before publication. The other book was "Where Jesus Walked." It was the story of Brother Brumback's trip to the holy land.

On March 17, Dewey Copeland died of a heart attack at Valdosta, Georgia. I met him first at the debate with G. K. Wallace, near Paragould, eight years before. During the interval I had been in his home many times. He and his wife and daughter had made a trip with Nell and myself to Banff and Lake Louise in Canada, returning by way of Yellowstone Park and the Black Hills. It seemed incredible that he was gone. Jim Mabery and myself went by train to Georgia to conduct the funeral service. It was a vast crowd we addressed.

On July 5, W. Curtis Porter died in a Memphis Hospital. He had known that he possessed a rare and incurable blood disease since 1942. When he first learned of the proposal of the brethren at Beech Grove to have me come to Arkansas, he bitterly opposed it. He spoke against me publicly and wrote letters trying to get the brethren to cancel my coming. He was the first one I met at my debate with Brother Wallace. Later, the two congregations in Paragould which opposed me so bitterly fell out among themselves. Brother Porter debated Guy N. Woods on institutionalism. It was while sitting in the audience listening to these two "pros" seeking to cut each other down that it dawned upon me how childish were the issues we were debating. I went to see Brother Porter at his home a few months before his final hospitalization. He was courteous and kind. He told

me that after seeing some of the actions of the brethren he was inclined to be more favorable to me than to them.

The saddest loss of all was that of my mother. She suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage at Topeka, Kansas, on Lord's Day morning, August 21. She was 77 years old. All the way from Saint Louis to Topeka I caught myself thinking of bygone days. I recalled how, when we were little, Mom used to sing us Danish lullabies as she rocked us. I remembered teaching her to read English. And I lived again the days of poverty. Her children had been her whole life.

She had known hardship, toil and pain, but now it was all over. Gone were the lonely nights when my father was away preaching and she was home worrying about sick children. My brother Paul and I conducted the memorial service. When I said the final benediction and turned away from the grave where her body would return to dust beside that of my father to whom she had always been true, I suddenly realized that our children had no grandparents left.

Not everything was death, of course. There was renewed life on many fronts. Brother Garrett and I continued our Saturday sessions at Hartford, Illinois. We met one Saturday per month for six consecutive months in the fall and winter. The subjects were weighty but timely. Each of us spoke an hour in the morning. At noon the sisters served an excellent meal and we all ate together. In the afternoon we took questions from the audience for two hours. We did not always agree but we loved one another and all of us learned. Out of these meetings grew the Hartford Forum, now the Saint Louis Forum. It has been one of the greatest influences in creating respect across party lines.

It was early in 1959 that we set up luncheon meetings at a restaurant in Springfield, Illinois, once per month. We met to discuss the implementation of God's will. The first one found 35 brethren from Churches of Christ and Christian Churches together. Brother Garrett presided. The theme was "How Can We Work Together For the Cause of Christ?" We met as friends and not as enemies. The next month more than 40 were present. It was a kind of daring experiment in those days. Now it is routine in our area.

In the March issue of the American Christian Review appeared an article over my signature entitled "A Statement of Fact." It was an apology for my actions in elevating "the Rough Draft," written in 1932, to a test of fellowship. I had reached the conclusion there was but one creed, the Lord Jesus Christ. To elevate an editorial statement of opinion into a test of union or communion was as absurd as it was wrong. I was particularly disturbed by the fact that we had summoned brethren from various sections of the country to a meeting in Kansas City, to take a stand on the issue. Such mass pressure seemed to me

in retrospect to be sectarian. It smacked too much of church councils in history, all of which ended up producing a new creed.

I began the series of articles on “Covenants of God.” I had become convinced that God had revealed Himself as a covenant-making God. He made covenants with Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Later He made a covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. They broke His covenant and He promised to make a new one. In it the motives and rules of action would be engraved upon the hearts of men. It became obvious that we were no longer under a written code. The new testament was not composed of twenty-seven books. The new covenant was a person. The apostolic epistles were not a code of jurisprudence. They were a collection of love letters written to believers in Jesus who were having difficulty imitating the Master.

My whole life was altered. Always before I had been laying down the law instead of living up to love. I had become a good lawyer and a poor lover. Now passages seemed to leap from the pages into my heart. “The law was a custodian to bring us to Christ, but after faith is come, we are no longer under a custodian.” Later this became the basis of my book “The Death of the Custodian.” Now I had to wrestle with the fact that faith had come. We were no longer under a written code. Everything took on a new perspective. I began to understand the grace of God. I began to see that love was the fulfillment of law. And I began to really walk in the Spirit.

I doubt that any other concept I have ever had since I accepted the invitation of Jesus and opened the door of my heart to let Him come in and sup with me, has had the profound effect upon me that the thought of a personal covenant with God has had. The church, redemption, reconciliation, worship, and all other facets of the life of faith took on new depths. Above all else it placed scripture in a completely new and proper context. It became a loving guideline along the road of life.

I began to read the Bible with new eyes. I began to meditate upon it with a new heart. What a blessing it was to realize that the verbal revelation of God was suspended from love for God and one’s fellows. “On these two hang all the law and the prophets.” I could see that what we called the church was simply the called and gathered. It was a universal community of the reconciled. It was the kingdom of heaven doing the will of God on earth as it is in heaven.

It was still several years before I fully realized that the kingdom was alive and energetic. It was flowing relentlessly like lava from above. There had been no previous trough constructed. Its form was determined by the contour of the terrain. It was mind-boggling for a former legalist to realize the pattern was not determined by a book containing a written code but by the world itself. The kingdom must be flexible enough to

move upon that world. The means, machinery and modes of service were dictated by raw human needs.

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## BOOK NOTES

Merlin Carothers can teach us how to praise the Lord more effectively. His new book, which we recommend highly, is *Victory on Praise Mountain* and is only 3.40 postpaid.

South Africa is a microcosm of many contemporary world problems, and we do well to be informed on what is going on in this troubled land. Her policy of apartheid has drawn world attention, and here is a book that tells the whole story, showing how it has divided the church as well as the nation: *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, by John W. DeGruchy, a native South African and a professor at the University of Cape Town. The foreword by Alan Paton, who knows the country so well, reveals the complexity of its many problems. 7.95 postpaid.

The College Press, Box 1132, Joplin, Mo. 64801, handles books that would be of interest to you. By writing them they would put your name on their list for a free catalogue and notices of new publications.

Dr. John T. Willis has edited a new volume on *The World and Literature of the Old Testament,* which contains 11 essays by nine Church of Christ scholars, such as Thomas Olbricht's 'The Making of Old Testament Books' and Neil Lightfoot's 'The Canon and Text of the Old Testament.' The editor has three essays, two of them on the history of Old Testament times. Everett Ferguson's 'Christian Use of the Old Testament' will be of special interest to you. This book is really something for people who have been neglectful of the Old Covenant Scriptures. 9.95 postpaid.

It may be high at 14.95, but it is one of those books that some students highly prize. *Historical Theology: An Introduction,* by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, is a history of doctrine. If you are interested in what the apostolic fathers believed, right on through Augustine and the leaders of the Reformation, this book will delight you. It was written for those who do not know much about the history of theology, so it will not lose you in technicalities. You can learn everything from what the Anabaptists believed about baptism to what Barth believed about the word of God.

James E. Smith is one of our Christian Church scholars who took his Ph.D. from the Jews themselves, at Hebrew Union College, so his *Ezekiel*, a 491 page study, should have it all. He gives his own translation from the Hebrew and a verse by verse interpretation. If you want to take Bible study seriously, this would be a good place to start. 13.95 postpaid.

There is hardly any area in which our people are more neglectful than in prayer and praise and devotional reading. *Daily Prayer and Praise*, compiled by George Appleton, has readings, prayers, meditations for mornings and evenings. A briefer edition went through eight printings and is in much demand. This enlarged edition is 4.49 postpaid.

The Sweet Co. in Austin is continuing with its commentary series on the NT, the latest being *1 Corinthians* by Carl Holladay, a scholar in the Church of Christ. 5.80 postpaid.

We are impressed by three books on *Revelation.* You would do well to study them all: *The Book of Revelation* by Harry Boer (4.55); *Interpreting Revelation* by Merrill Tenney (7.55); *Commentary on Revelation* by George Eldon Ladd (5.55). Prices postpaid.

For 3.50 we will send you a delightful book for those who are growing old and those who plan to someday. It is both philosophical and practical, and it is fun reading. *You Don't Have to Be Old When You Grow Old* by Florence Taylor faces aging with courage and zest.

Written by a man who saw his first spirit when he was five. *The Challenging Counterfeit* is an inside exposure of Spiritualism by one who practiced it. Once a medium himself, he tells the whole story of "revelations" and contact with the dead, and points to the real Spirit as the only assurance, now that he is a believer. 2.50 postpaid.

Postal prices continue to skyrocket. Starting July 6 it will cost us 59 cents to mail a book weighing one pound or less. That increase is reflected in the above prices.

When renewing your sub, why not send the paper to four of your friends, for the club of 5 is only 10.00.

You may not agree with what Oscar Cullman says about infant baptism, but you'll learn what a recognized scholar says on this subject generally in *Baptism in the New Testament.* His main concern is to determine what baptism should mean to us today. 4.45 postpaid.

We still have copies of *Daughters of the King*, which asks the question of whether a woman must submit. It is both sensitive and hard-hitting. Only 2.45 postpaid.

Those interested in unity should keep abreast with what some of the great thinkers are saying on that subject, such as John MacQuarrie's new book, *Christian Unity and Christian Diversity.* The author, an Oxford professor, deals with the problems in the way of

unity and will surprise you with his argument that Rome must be the center of unity, and the changes Rome must and may make eventually. 3.35 postpaid.

We would put on your "must" list F. F. Bruce's *The Time* is *Fulfilled*, which beautifully combines information with devotion. He provides spiritual insight into God's plan through Christ, with such chapters as "Abraham Our Father" and "A Shadow of Good Things to Come" being most helpful. He shows the significance of "the time is fulfilled" and how Jesus responded to the call by initiating what the Father had in mind. 3.45 postpaid.

Our bound volume for 1978, *The Ancient Order,* has been mailed to those who ordered it, with invoice enclosed. This volume is now available at 5.50, if you remit with your order, 6.30 if you ask us to bill you.

Other bound volumes still available are: *Principles of Unity and Fellowship* (1977) at 5.50; *The Word Abused* (1975 and 1976 in one volume) at 5.95; *The Restoration Mind* (1971 and 1972 in one volume) for 4.95.

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## READERS' EXCHANGE

It is truly sinful the way we have fragmented and divided Christ's body by twisting scriptures. If we claim to have Christ in us, yet we love only those in our particular church, we are only fooling ourselves and breaking Christ's commandments the same as if we were murderers or thieves. Our only salvation is to pray to God to fill our hearts with enough love to overcome the divisions made by man.—*C. W. Weinsheimer*

I still feel you are a lonely voice among us, but perhaps someday.—*Jess Wilburn, Broken Bow, OK.*

I feel that the Lord continues to open the eyes of many in Montgomery. I hope and pray that the message of love and fellowship that you teach may spread among our own people until we are filled with the Spirit and are truly united and at peace with all men.—*James Hilyer, Montgomery, AL*

So you were 60 Dec. 11. I was 58 the same date! Will give an extra harrah next year on the 11 tho I am strengthened by your attitude toward all believers. Hope someday to meet your whole family—*Wayne Miller, Newton, IO*

It looks as if 60 isn't going to hurt you any. I pray the Lord will add a couple more scores to you, and that he has someone waiting to take your place. The Disciples Church here will be 150 years old in 1981 and the minister and I have talked about some way to celebrate that would involve both congregatrions.—*L. D. Campbell, Florence, KY*

The gospel cannot be made very convincing to non-Christians until we put aside our differences and begin to speak as a united voice on the broad basis of all the things on which we are in agreement. The Disciples of Christ came into being over 150 years ago because of the recognition that Christ's church is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one, and that it is made up of all those everywhere who accept Christ in sincerity and who seek to be his disciples. I love my own church, the Park Avenue Christian Church in New York City, because it bears witness in this city to the one denomination in the world that has this understanding of its only reason for continued separate existence, i.e., to work for the unity of the whole church.—*Comer Shacklell, Westfield, NJ*

The prayer for your front cover was offered in the hope that someone might see the wisdom of bequeathing unto our children something higher, nobler, and grander than the feuds of our ancestors. May our children by God's grace be given the courage to extricate themselves from the bondage to which so many of us fell prey in days gone by, when by an artful process of juggling, perverting, and taking scriptures out of context we were able to make it appear that the Good Shepherd had no sheep outside our tiny fold worthy of brotherly love and fellowship. It was then that our carnal mind became desensitized to the words: "Not only for these do I pray, but for all those that shall believe on my name, that they may be one as we are one, that they may be one in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" and "By this may all men know that you are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."—*Stewart Hanson, Sr., Long Beach, CA*

It is 18 degrees and a roaring, raging blizzard. Old man winter wants us to know he is still in control, and just because we had a week or so of slow thaw and lost a foot or two of our snow depth (about one-half) we are not through with our ration for the season. We have had at least 12 inches since last evening and high winds, which means drifts up to five feet. We are to get at least six inches more before it blows out, and as of now (noon) all police agencies are ordering all places and all roads closed, for the crews can't keep up. It looks as if we will have to be "unfaithful" and "forsake the assembly" tomorrow since I can't find my car in the driveway. We have had 125 inches of snow this winter! What do you do when you are snowbound? I have been reading to Anna while she mixes up some food. *Restoration Review* of course!—*Louis and Anna Blissett, Marquette, MI*

(Note to our many California readers: Count your blessings!)

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## OUR CHANGING WORLD

Dr. Paul Crow, who is ecumenical officer for Disciples of Christ, recently presented Pope John Paul with a copy of the *Declaration and Address* by Thomas Campbell. The Vatican released a photo showing the new pope studying the document. The Disciples and Roman Catholics have been conducting unilateral discussions, most recently on baptism.

We reported earlier in this column of how the Central Church of Christ in Irving (Dallas), Texas joined the Dallas Area Community of Churches so as to have a broader ministry to those most in need of the gospel. The reactions from abroad have been mixed, but mostly encouraging. A few churches have "withdrawn" from them in this *autonomous* fellowship of ours, and the *Gospel Advocate* excoriated them for forsaking the Cause. As a result of the *Advocate* writeup the Central church has received responses from all over the country encouraging them in their more open position and expressing revulsion to the party politics involved, and Central is now having more to come and place membership with them than ever before in recent history. When I saw some of the Central elders recently, I told them they should be grateful for all the free advertising they were getting!

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